

Remarks

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed April 23, 2003. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's consideration of the Application and the Examiner's acknowledgement that Claims 26, 34, 37, 38, 50, 53, and 54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Although Applicants believe all pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record without amendment, to expedite issuance of this Application Applicants have

- 1) canceled Claims 13, 23, 25, 33, 36, 45, and 52 without prejudice or disclaimer;
- 2) rewritten Claims 26, 34, 37, 38, 50, 53, and 54 in independent form; and
- 3) changed the dependencies of Claims 20, 21, 24, 28-31, 35, 46-49, and 51.

These changes do not narrow at least Claims 26, 34, 37, 38, 50, 53, and 54. Applicants have amended Claim 66 to include limitations substantially similar to Claim 34. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgement that Claims 26, 34, 37, 38, 50, 53, and 54 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and the Examiner's allowance of Claims 2-5, 7-12, 14-18, 40-44, 56-60, and 62-65. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.104, Applicants respectfully issue a statement commenting on the Examiner's reasons for allowance. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's reasons for allowance to the extent that they are inconsistent with applicable case law, statutes, and regulations. Furthermore, Applicants do not admit to any characterization or limitation of the claims, particularly any that are inconsistent with the language of the claims considered in their entirety and including all of their constituent limitations, or to any characterization of a reference by the Examiner.

Conclusion

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this Application in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and full allowance of all pending claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the Examiner is invited to contact Christopher W. Kennerly, Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6812.

Although Applicants believe no fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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